

STEERING, LEGISLATIVE & GOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE

January 3, 2013

5:30 p.m.

Courthouse

MINUTES:

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Commissioner Jack Black
Commissioner Gary Farley
Commissioner Trey Gooch
Commissioner Jeff Jordan
Commissioner Allen McAdoo
Commissioner Steve Sandlin
Commissioner Adam Coggin, C

OTHERS PRESENT:

Ernest Burgess	Lisa Nolen
Bill Ketron	Rick Womick
Mike Sparks	Joe Carr
Dawn White	Joyce Ealy
Chantho Sourinho	Doug Shafer
Keith Bratcher	Becky Shelton

Chairman Coggin presided and called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. with all members being present at that time.

MINUTES:

"Commissioner Gooch moved, seconded by Commissioner Farley, to approve the minutes of the last meeting as mailed. This motion passed unanimously by acclamation."

MEETING WITH LEGISLATORS:

Chairman Coggin thanked Senator Ketron and Representatives Carr, Sparks, White and Womick for meeting with the Steering Committee and ask their thoughts on the upcoming legislative session.

Senator Ketron advised he had met with the State Treasurer recently who had shared that the most concerning thing this year is the budget and that TennCare is driving the budget. Senator Ketron further advised they would endeavor to not send any unfunded mandates to the local governments.

Representative Womick advised he was focusing on the Eagleville sewer system and the CDBG grant would be needed next year.

Representative Carr advised it was a challenging year in front of the Legislature with TennCare.

Representative White is newly elected.

Representative Sparks advised corrections and drugs are big issues for him.

Commissioner Gooch commended Representative Sparks on fighting paraphernalia in local markets and inquired how counties will be affected with the unwanted healthcare requirements. Representative Carr advised they did not know as all the rules have not been promulgated yet and they are being changed as they are being written. Many governors chose the federal program to run the Affordable Healthcare Act because they don't have the rules yet and it is challenging to implement. States are required to have a balanced budget and the federal government has not had a balanced budget in years.

Representative Womick advised the State can set up the State exchange in the future when all the rules are known. Additionally, the federal government does not have the money to set up State exchanges.

Senator Ketron advised it will be necessary to expand Medicaid which is an increased cost to the State. Currently rules are open ended and the State cannot get answers. Representative Womick advised the money is not there and Congress is going to have to do something so it will be interesting to see what happens.

Commissioner Sandlin advised he hoped the State is not throwing money to TennCare and is scared by school vouchers as he saw this as a big price tag locally. Representative Carr advised the vouchers are coming out of distress in Shelby County. Commissioner Sandlin advised the State has thrown a lot of money to Shelby County for years. Representative Carr advised the State is trying to create a way out and options for students but is trying to fix a problem in one area that does not exist in other areas. The State is interested in looking at counties being able to issue the voucher system if they choose. Senator Ketron advised vouchers are high on the Governor's agenda but homeschooling is a whole other issue and he did not think anything would come forward this year or next. Additionally charter schools seem to be working well in Davidson County. Commissioner Sandlin ask if anyone saw changes in BEP funding and the answer was no.

Commissioner J. Jordan advised he appreciated the concern on the Eagleville sewer situation as they are approaching desperate. Commissioner J. Jordan also expressed his concern over the loss of educators statewide due to retirement or transfer to the central office and ask if anyone saw a connection to the State legislation on educational issues. Senator Ketron advised with the Connecticut event he foresaw a bill on school safety and the Governor has taken higher education off the agenda due to TennCare. Representative Carr advised he would like to see the data points on who is leaving the educational system and why as they may not be meeting minimum standards or is it the State legislation driving them out. This would be an unintended consequence. Commissioner Sandlin cautioned the government getting involved and mandating across the board security requirements. Representative Carr agreed advising this needed to be left to the local level but do need an assessment on security. Rutherford County is the leader in the State on SRO's and student security. Representative Womick advised the State has corrected the evaluation requirements to some degree. Representative Sparks advised he does hear teacher complaints and sees a disconnect as he has never met with a TEA lobbyist. He would like to hear more from teachers and have more dialogue.

Commissioner McAdoo advised the SRO program was pushed because of bullying and gangs in schools and he thought the biggest issue was obsolete Private Acts on the books. Senator Ketron advised Private Acts come from the Commission for passage and they were willing to act on anything that was sent to the Legislature.

There are two Financial Management Acts on the books and Mayor Burgess has been trying to get them updated. They are on the second version now and it appears to be a reasonable replacement to the prior Act. Senator Ketron advised they were trying to catch up with technology. Mayor Burgess advised they are in the process of reviewing the Private Acts and it is the County's responsibility to deal with.

Commissioner Sandlin advised in tough budget years the maintenance of effort can be difficult and counties may need help to adjust this.

Commissioner Black advised he appreciated the drug paraphernalia work. Representative Sparks advised if District Attorney's are not going to prosecute then the Beer Boards should be allowed to handle.

Representative Sparks advised schools need to require utility bills to keep students from Antioch in the Davidson County system. Commissioner J. Jordan advised the County has a policy requiring a utility bill but there are new principals and they may not be following the policy so this will be followed up on.

Mayor Burgess next thanked the delegation for the increase in the State prisoner per diem advising it would be nice to have a cost of living adjustment attached. Additionally, providing adequate public notice is a difficult area and he would appreciate the

Legislature addressing this subject. Currently there is only case law. Representative Carr inquired if the Mayor wanted a statutory definition and the response was yes. Representative Womick advised there has been failed legislation on public notices the last two years due to the woodwork effect and powerful lobbying efforts.

Mayor Burgess advised sales tax collection is important and ask the delegation to encourage internet sales tax collection for equity. There has been double digit growth in internet sales and he thought objectively this was an astounding amount of money. The Committee was advised Apple collects sales tax in Tennessee but does not remit it and the Comptroller is to investigate.

Mayor Burgess next requested assistance with T.C.A. 68-4-103 with respect to burying indigent and ask to get this broadened to use less costly measures.

Commissioner Shafer next advised as to unfunded mandates he would like to see a fiscal impact when the same are passed.

APPOINTMENT OF JUDICIAL COMMISSIONER:

Chairman Coggin next advised Judges of the General Sessions Court of Rutherford County have requested appointment of Sherry Hamlett as a judicial commissioner pursuant to the authority contained in Tennessee Public Acts of 1978, Chapter 933, for a term not to exceed four years and such term to conclude and terminate if and when the term is concluded or the service with Rutherford County is terminated. Following discussion,

"Commissioner Farley moved, seconded by Commissioner Sandlin, to recommend appointment of Sherry Hamlett as judicial commissioner for a term not to exceed four years and such term to conclude and terminate if and when the term is concluded or the service with Rutherford County is terminated. This motion passed unanimously by acclamation."

ANNOUNCE VACANCY ON CONSERVATION BOARD:

Chairman Coggin next announced the position of Clarence Brandon on the Conservation Board was expiring and accordingly being announced.

There appearing to be no further business to come before the Committee, Chairman Coggin declared the meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

ADAM COGGIN, Chairman